
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2023

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 11 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/M1710/W/23/3314448

9A Normandy Street, Alton, Hampshire GU34 1DD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Ian Rogers against the decision of East Hampshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 59919, dated 5 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as the replacement of 1st floor windows from wooden single glazed sash windows to heritage uPVC double glazed windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to the first floor flat of this 2 storey building, located within the Alton Conservation Area. The Council states that the building dates from the 18th Century and it contains a commercial use at the ground floor and a flat above. The area contains numerous commercial properties at the ground floor and residential uses above. The conservation area contains a rich mixture of property styles and sizes, many retaining original or historic features.
4. The appeal relates to the 2 first floor windows on the front elevation of the building. These are timber sash windows with single glazing. They are in a poor state of repair and the Council have accepted that they need to be replaced. The Council add that, whilst double glazing is not a traditional feature, its use on an unlisted building within a conservation area may be acceptable subject to, amongst other things: the window frames being timber; a maximum thickness of the double glazing of 23mm and; any subdivision of the panes should not be by surface mounted bars.
5. The proposal is for uPVC double glazing and the appellant has submitted various details. However, the submitted details indicate various options for the sizes and profiles of various elements of windows, frames and sills. Whilst the existing windows are said to date from the 1950s by the appellant and so are not original, they are of a traditional design, being of timber and have slender

frames and single glazing. Setting aside their state of disrepair, their design is reflective of the traditional form and appearance of the building. In my judgement the proposed uPVC double glazed units would be an obvious addition to the building that would appear modern and out of place on this building within this conservation area. I consider that the windows would fail to reflect the positive aspects of the conservation area and would fail to preserve or enhance its character and appearance. I have taken account of other examples of uPVC windows in the conservation area, as referred to by the appellant. I have not been provided with any planning history relating to these examples and so it is difficult to draw any useful conclusions. However, they represent non-traditional additions which, in my view, do not successfully add to the conservation area and so do not compel me to look favourably on the appeal scheme. As a result, I find that the proposal is contrary to Policies CP29 and CP30 of the Joint Core Strategy.

6. The National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, in this case the conservation area, great weight should be given to its conservation, irrespective of the level of harm. Adding that any harm should require clear and convincing justification. In the light of the advice in the Framework, I judge that the harm would amount to less than substantial harm. This needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I have considered the benefits, as set out by the appellant and in my judgement, they would be insufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of the conservation area.
7. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR